



NEWSLETTER OF THE LONDON CHAPTER,  
ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

c/o Museum of Ontario Archaeology  
1600 Attawandaron Road, London, ON N6G 3M6



January and February 2012

12-1 & 2

The next meeting of the London Chapter will be held on Thursday, October 11, 2012 at the Museum of Ontario Archaeology starting at 8 PM. The speaker will be **Phil Woodley** of New Directions Archaeology Ltd. Phil will be talking about his firm's work at a Late Woodland, Uren Substage village, notable for the large number of "turtle pits" uncovered. The presentation is entitled: ***Preliminary Discussion of the Redeemer College Site (AhGx-114) Excavations in Ancaster, Ontario.***

### **\*\*NOTE\*\***

There will be **NO** November meeting of the Chapter this year as the **Annual Meeting of the Ontario Archaeological Society** that we are jointly hosting with the Windsor Chapter in Windsor is to be held the same week (see the advertisement on the back of this Kewa). Our next meeting will be **Annual Christmas Party** that will be held in December at a time and place to be announced later.

Speaker's Night is held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month (January to April and September to December) at the Museum of Ontario Archaeology, 1600 Attawandaron Road, near the corner of Wonderland & Fanshawe Park Road, in the northwest part of the city. The meeting starts at 8:00 pm.

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## TWO PALEOINDIAN BIFACES FROM HALDIMAND

By Jeff Bursey

### INTRODUCTION

Following some of the increase in public awareness of archaeology in the Haldimand region, a pair of interesting and significant projectile points recovered this spring made their way to longtime avocational archaeologist Fred Moerschfelder who in turn brought them to my attention. One of these is an example of a relatively rare projectile point type that is only the sixth fluted point reported for Haldimand-Norfolk (Hanson 2010: Table 3.17) and thus, amongst the oldest known culture-historical diagnostics for that area reported so far. The second is from the more well-known and common Late Paleoindian horizon but may represent a variation of the Hi-Lo type (Fitting 1963) that warrants more attention. In this report, these two bifaces will be described in detail and I will then discuss their significance.

### GAINEY POINT

The first biface to be described was recovered from a ploughed field immediately southeast of Sweets Corners, approximately two kilometers north of the Lake Erie shore. Sweets Corners is almost due south of Cayuga and west of Dunnville. A brief visit to the site, made in order to confirm the location and setting, revealed it to be a low knoll with a small intermittent stream to the south and a second, flowing south into the first, located to the west. While the site area was cultivated and currently used to grow soya beans, the limits to the site on the north and east were not determinable because of the limits of cultivation.

Although the site area was being used to grow beans at the time of the visit, artifacts across the site area were seen to be particularly abundant and the area apparently remains a popular local one for collectors. The small intermittent stream to the south had initially been incised down to bedrock, which includes fairly thick and massive strata of Onondaga chert. Consequently, although the stream has since been choked by sediments following historic clearance of the forests and cultivation, it appears to have been an active prehistoric quarry site and fields on both the north and south sides of the stream are littered with abundant debris from Onondaga chert reduction.

The brief and cursory surface *inspection* revealed hundreds of bifaces and biface fragments, a large Adder Orchard biface recycled into a hafted end scraper and a Late Archaic Small Point (none of which were collected). Other chert types, including one large biface of Selkirk chert, appear to have also been occasionally transported to the site but abandoned, perhaps simply replaced by Onondaga chert bifaces. Additional possible Paleoindian artifacts, specifically flake shavers or “beaks” (Ellis and Racher 2011), are also reported to have been recovered from this site but the author has not had an opportunity to examine them. Also of note is a large and impressive assemblage of Genesee points and preforms in a private collection recovered from a property on the Lake Erie shore to the immediate south.

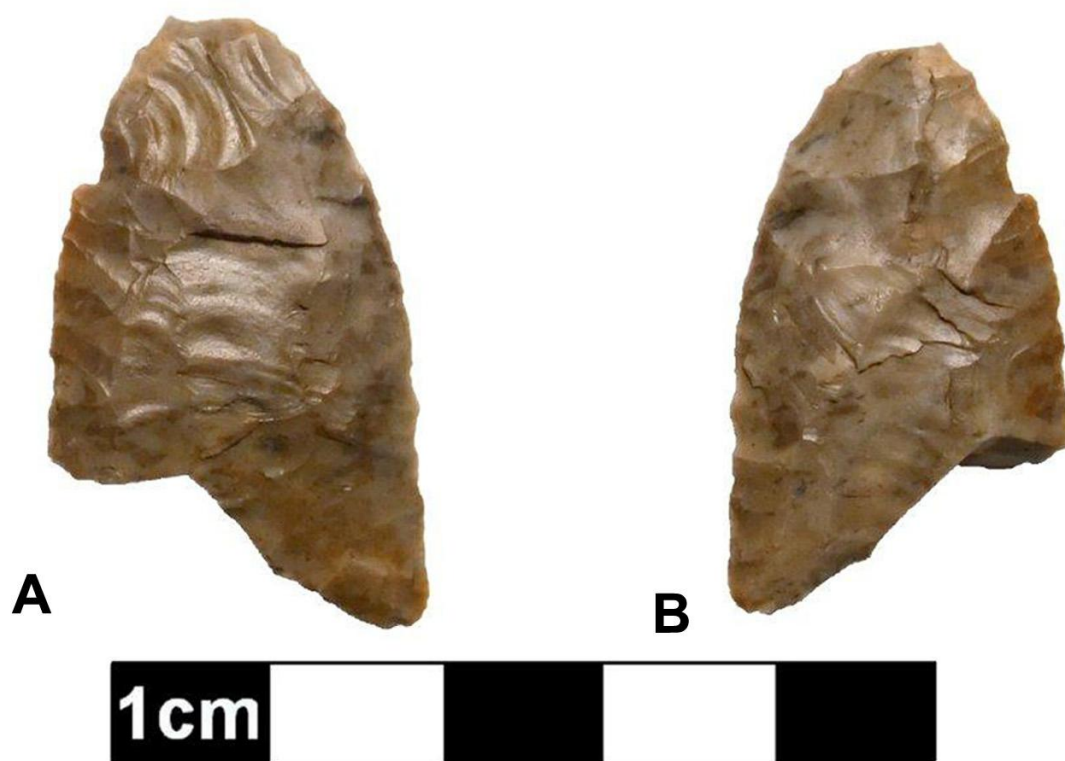


Figure 1: Obverse and reverse of fluted point from near Sweets Corners.

The Gainey point was manufactured from a high quality, glossy mottled grey Onondaga chert that has gained a slight patina from age (Figure 1). The sides are parallel and straight, except towards the tip, with neither any evidence of constriction or flaring of the ears along the hafting section. One ear, here identified as the dorsal left, and approximately 13 mm of the base is missing, snapped across the blade approximately 11.5 mm from the maximum length by what appears to have been a twisting fracture. The overall length is a short 36.4 mm and this characteristic plus its “sub-triangular” shape suggests it was heavily used/resharpened (see Ellis 2004b). The maximum width is 22.3 mm, and the thickness varies slightly from 4.7 to 5.2 mm. Although incomplete, given the straight sides it is clear the point had a basal width over 20 mm wide. The remnant of the basal concavity is 4.9 mm deep.

The dorsal face has two channel flake scars. The longest terminates 13.9 mm from the tip in a shallow step fracture. It is 8 mm in maximum width. To its left is a narrower (5.5 mm) channel flake that is terminated by the later (as inferred by the over-lapping flake scar), wider flute, 19.3 mm from the tip. The single ventral flute has a “feather” termination 17.7 mm from the tip and is a maximum 11.1 mm wide. The tip is almost flattened by a traversing flake detachment that does not appear to have been the result of an impact fracture. Both faces distal to the flutes were crossed by relatively wide (estimated average of 6-7 mm) but shallow thinning flakes that typically crossed the midline while the lateral edges were retouched with shorter (<5 mm) and narrower (estimated range of 3-5 mm with an average just over 4 mm wide) retouch flakes. On the dorsal face, the base appears to have been flaked after fluting by detachments that extend up

to 12.8 mm from the ears or 7.9 mm from the edge of the basal cavity. On the ventral surface, basal retouch is much shorter, extending only 3 mm from the edge of the basal concavity. One chip, producing what appears to be a notch, on the dorsal left near the tip may be from plough damage but there is no discernable difference in the surface patina.

The overall form, particularly the straight sides and lack of “fish-tailing” clearly indicate attribution to the Gainey fluted point type believed to be the type closest in form and age to the earliest documented fluted point type, Clovis of western North America (Ellis and Deller 1990:40, 45). Indeed, some call these points “Clovis-like” (Ellis et al 2012; Hanson 2010). The measurements of the point also all fall within the range of examples of Gainey points reported elsewhere (e.g. Deller and Ellis 1992: Tables 12-15; Ellis et al. 2003) except it is somewhat thin – but that may be due to the fact it has been resharpened to such a short length. Certainly, the wide inferred basal is notable as Gainey/Clovis-like points are the only ones to have such a width over 20 mm, inferred later Barnes and Crowfield points having narrower basal widths.

### **DECEWSVILLE HI-LO**

A biface assignable to the Hi-Lo Complex (Ellis 2004a; Ellis et al. 2009) was recovered from near Decewsville Road approximately four km west of the Grand River near Cayuga, Ontario (Figure 2). Although the precise site location has not been ascertained as yet, this area is also situated amongst abundant chert outcrops. Within a couple of kilometers to the north and west, there are massive exposures of Haldimand chert (e.g. Parker 1986a and b) while one of the most spatially extensive Onondaga chert outcrops the author has observed is located less than 100 meters east of Decewsville Road (see Bursey 1996). Consequently, while not well represented in the literature, this area is particularly known for an abundance of Hi-Lo sites.

The Hi-Lo point was also manufactured from a relatively glossy, light grey variant of Onondaga chert with darker grey and larger tan coloured mottling. The transverse cross section is planar-convex with the planar/flat face here identified as the ventral surface. A haft section is identifiable extending 13.7 mm from the maximum extent of the basal “ears” but differs slightly on the two sides. The right side (as viewed from the reverse or Figure 2b) is relatively straight, with only a slight (<2 mm) narrowing from the maximum blade width. The left side (on Figure 2b) has a hafting section that is slightly more pronounced or demarcated (+/- 3 mm in from the maximum blade width) and somewhat concave. When seen in longitudinal profile, the lateral edges of the hafting section are relatively straight while both lateral edges of the blade sections are slightly sinuous. Although there is a slight edge-bevelling effect, counter-clockwise when viewed from the tip, this does not appear to have been the product of extensive lateral edge retouch but instead appears to have been only lightly used and re-sharpened when lost or abandoned: the tip and distal blade edges were retouched primarily on the ventral surface but with some dorsal retouch confined to the tip. Flake detachments from retouch extended 2-2.5 mm from the edges.

The maximum length of the biface is about 43 mm. The maximum width is 27.1 mm with a maximum haft width of 24.7 mm. The maximum thickness is 6.4 mm at approximately mid blade but this thickness is located on a hump partially left by a step fracture initiated from the left side (in Figure 2a view): most of the biface thickness is between 4 and 5 mm. There is a

pronounced basal concavity between 4 and 5 mm deep produced by retouch flake detachments that extend approximately 4.5 mm from the base. In terms of all these measures, with notably the exception of a thickness under 5 mm (ignoring the hump produced by the step fracture), the biface falls within the range of Hi-Lo point size reported elsewhere (compare with Ellis and Deller 1982: Table 3). Other than the short basal retouch flakes just referred to, there are no remnant flake detachments initiated from the base. The base and lateral margins of the haft were ground moderately smooth.

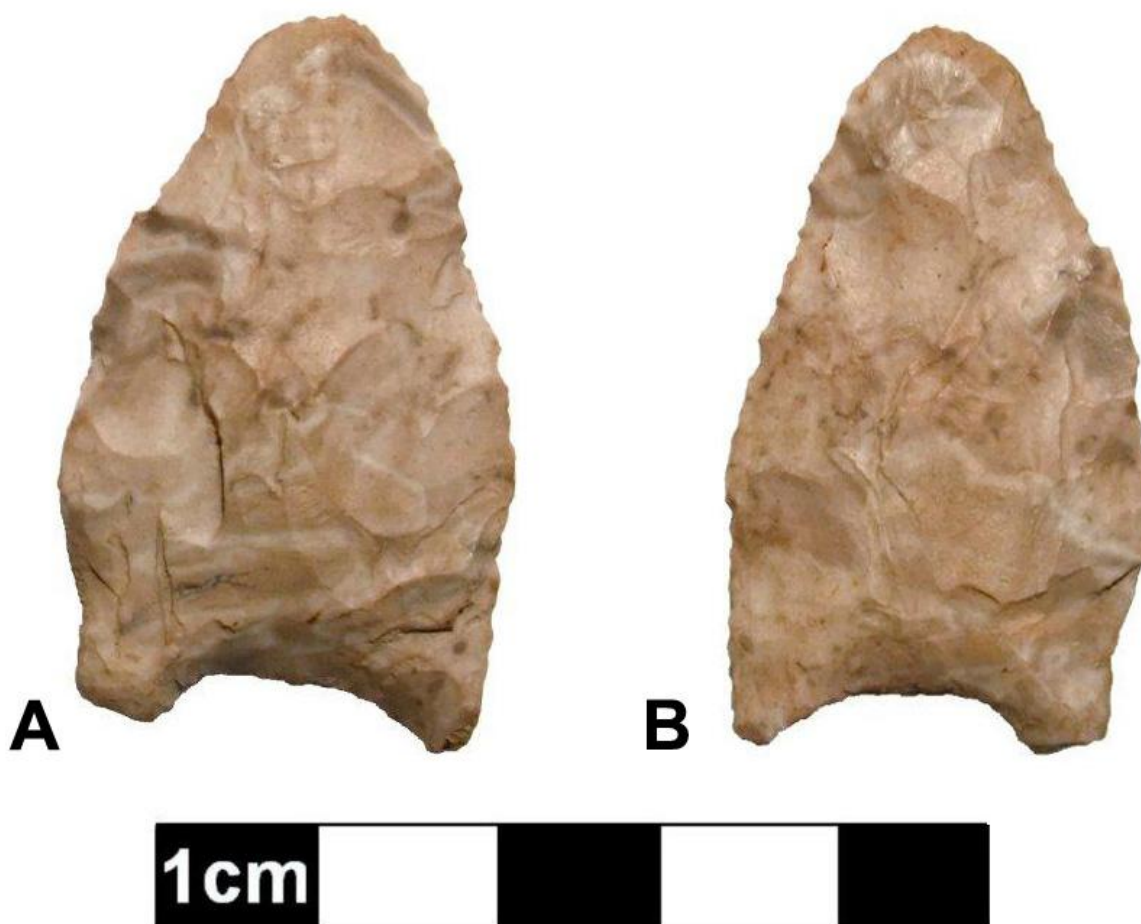


Figure 2: Obverse and reverse of Hi-Lo point from near Decewsville.

## DISCUSSION

Both of the bifaces described above offer insights into the late Pleistocene, Paleoindian occupations of southern Ontario. The Gainey fluted point has been argued to represent the earliest technological horizon and, thus, probably the first peopling of southern Ontario (Ellis and Deller 1990:46). To date, the most well known site of this complex is the Udora site, excavated by Peter Storck on the glacial Lake Algonquin shoreline north of Uxbridge, Ontario (Storck 2004; Storck and Spiess 1994). For the most part, therefore, with the notable exception

of the Udora site, the earliest technological horizon known for southern Ontario is known primarily from isolated finds and extrapolation from slightly later dating assemblages.

Aside from being the first Haldimand County fluted point described *in detail* in the literature, the Sweets Corners Gainey point is in association with extensive outcrops of Onondaga chert and was manufactured from that material. Of course, Gainey and other fluted point types were commonly made from Onondaga chert and Gainey points are actually most common on that material at a provincial scale (Hanson 2010: Table 4.11). Yet, it is tempting to identify this site as an early example of the exploitation of this chert type at this place. Certainly, the abundant evidence of quarrying and tool manufacture at this site, at least in later times, makes this inference appear reasonable. However, some caution is required because the recovered biface is the distal end, missing part of the base or hafting section, possibly from a fracture during hunting. Accordingly, while it is possible this local was an occupation area where game was butchered and tool kits refurbished, it also remains possible that this biface fragment entered the archaeological record as an accidental hunting loss, at a kill site somewhat near a habitation site or even represents a projectile point section that was embedded in a wounded animal and was deposited an extended time and distance from when and where the animal was struck (Gramly 1984). Further investigations in this area will obviously be necessary to determine the nature of Gainey occupations here. Nonetheless, this biface does add to our slowly growing knowledge of early use of the environs of the north shore of Lake Erie.

The Decewsville biface somewhat brackets the other end of the Paleoindian in this region. While bifaces assignable to the Hi-Lo complex are abundantly represented in local collections, this specific example caught my eye for a number of reasons. Literally, when first seen from across a dimly lit room, the biface appeared to be most like variants of the Hi-Lo complex inferred to be intermediate between Hi-Lo and Holcombe increasingly being referred to as “Hi-Ho” points (Ellis 2004b:64). While a hafting section is obviously present, it is debatable whether the stem is as pronounced as that seen on “classic” Hi-Lo hafted bifaces and I will not make that argument here. What I did find remarkable about this particular biface, however, was the overall quality of the flaking patterns. Most Hi-Lo bifaces I have seen from this region and beyond are relatively “thick and clunky” with relatively prominent arises between flake scars suggestive, to me, of possible additional use as a kind of hafted core for detaching sharp flakes as needed.

Aside from a relatively minor hump near the hafting section, however, this biface was much more flatly flaked with virtually nonexistent arises leading to the inference that the detached flakes would not likely have been suitable for subsequent tool use. In fact, again aside from the relatively minor hump, the overall biface is remarkably flat and finely flaked with a thickness of less than 5 mm. Given that there are no thinning flake scars originating from the base, it is also possible that the biface was somewhat longer and probably wider but the base snapped off and the recovered distal section was retouched by non-intrusive flake detachments, to produce the recovered specimen. Certainly, the overall impression is that this biface was manufactured to be very flat and thin through “over shot” flake detachments not intended to leave any sort of central ridge and then very lightly retouched to produce the Hi-Lo shape.

One pet hypothesis of mine for the appearance of the Hi-Lo form is that Hi-Lo bifaces were designed to be used as emergency “cores” for the production of small sharp flakes as needed

while on expeditions at least somewhat removed from locations where the full toolkit was located. This interpretation, I would argue, could account for both the nature of the Hi-Lo biface and the relative paucity of identified Hi-Lo occupation sites, as opposed to isolated find spots, in more distant locals such as north of the Lake Ontario shores (without ignoring the probability that more artifact rich sites are to be located beneath the current water levels). In this speculative scenario, earlier thinner Paleoindian bifaces were simply not designed to be used as cores although this multiple functionality may have been returned to, albeit in a different manner, in the transition from the Hi-Lo to the Early Archaic, Kirk Corner-notched technological system (if that happened Bursey 2012). Ultimately, whether or not any of these hypotheses are supported by further investigations, I do think that one method of resolving some of these ideas may be to test some of the insights we gain through the close examination of some key artifact classes such as bifaces and scrapers against close observation of what are often considered to be non-diagnostic flakes. If my speculations are correct, then I would predict that “classic” Hi-Lo assemblages might include some examples of utilized flakes detached from “finished” bifaces while earlier “Hi-Ho” assemblages will not, instead dominated, perhaps exclusively, by flake tools struck only from cores, including “early-stage” bifacial cores but rarely, if ever, with utilized secondary reduction flakes with complex dorsal flaking patterns.

## POSTSCRIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It has become increasingly common to include some kind of statement or disclaimer of bias in the anthropological/archaeological literature and I felt it appropriate to include one here. I do believe it is imperative to acknowledge the surviving interests of some dedicated avocationals in this province who may increasingly feel they are being left out, if not deliberately ignored, by the commercial CRM sector (without commenting here on the causes of their perhaps growing dissatisfaction). Fred Moerschfelder has been a personal friend and often mentor to me as well as a staunch archaeological conservationist and supporter of archaeological research on the lower Grand River since Bill Fox first recruited him and Bud Parker first excavated with him in the early 1980s. However, truth be told, I also tried mighty hard to see this biface as a possible transitional form between the Holcombe type and the “Hi-Ho” forms. After all, who wouldn’t want to be the first to call something a “Ho-Hi-Ho”?

The arrangements to take the photos on a short “turn-around” schedule were made through the courtesy of Paul Racher, Dean Knight and Patrick Hoskins, all with Archaeological Research Associates, Inc., and to them I offer my gratitude. Of course, any and all flights of fancy and whimsy are purely the responsibility of the author.

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## **AN UPDATED FLUTED POINT SURVEY FOR SOUTHERN ONTARIO**

**By Caitlin Hanson and Chris Ellis**

This research developed an updated database of all known fluted point locations in southern Ontario that could be used to test several of the predominant hypotheses about biases in the sample and temporal changes in Early Paleoindian land-use patterns. The last compilations date to 25+ years ago and several of those studies were hampered by the fact that point typologies and recognition practices were not well-developed at the time. For example, 24% of the points included in Garrad's (1971) survey would now be assigned to the unfluted Holcombe and Hi-Lo types.

This survey (Hanson 2010) documented 141 separate fluted point locations<sup>1</sup>. Compared to surrounding areas, a relatively high 34% of the Ontario locations (N=48) were actual sites with multiple artifacts whereas 66% (N=93) were findspots of isolated bifaces. We attribute this pattern to the large number of Paleoindian surveys (Deller 1979; Storck 1982, etc.) which have been focused along the pro-glacial shoreline of main Algonquin (dated at ca. 11,000 to 10,300 RCYBP; see Karrow et al. 1975). Fluted point locations were categorized as to whether they were accidental finds (e.g. unanticipated) or purposeful ones (e.g. found in targeted survey). Perhaps not surprisingly, a significant difference exists: 58.3% of the sites were found purposefully as opposed to only 15.1% of the findspots (Fisher's Exact  $p=.000$ ). Unlike other areas, no correlations were evident between density of locations and modern population densities, possibly because so many locations were found in academic work. Nonetheless, there

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<sup>1</sup> The newly reported fluted point from Haldimand described elsewhere in this *Kewa* issue by Bursey is not included in this total.

were also no correlations of the accidental finds alone, or even CRM finds, with population density (Hanson 2010).

The sample does have some major biases, however. It is not surprising that a large segment of the locations occur where academics have looked near the Algonquin strandline. Using GIS, the length of the strandline is 1009.26 km and with a 5 km inland buffer zone would include 5046.30 km<sup>2</sup> of land, which represents only 5.6% of the study area but includes 25% of the locations. Other direct evidence of sample bias can be seen in the number of sites versus findspots in those areas. For example, 61% of the sites were found in the strandline area as opposed to the interior area where only 29% of the locations are sites (Fisher's Exact  $p=.002$ ). There are actually more sites in the strandline areas (N=19) as opposed to findspots (N=12). As sites are more likely to be purposeful discoveries, the higher number of sites near the strandline undoubtedly reflects that bias. Indeed, if we test purposeful versus accidental finds by interior versus strandline, 52% of the purposefully found locations are in the Algonquin vicinity and 48% in the interior - as compared to the accidental finds where only 10% are in the Algonquin vicinity and 90% in the interior (Fisher's Exact  $p=.000$ ).

These biases clearly can have an effect on interpretation, but some biases can be controlled. For example, by subdividing the locations by the apparent temporal sequence of Clovis/Gainey (N=59; 40.1%), Barnes/Parkhill (N=41; 27.9%) and Crowfield (N=26; 17.7%) (Ellis and Deller 1997) fluted points, frequency declines over time ( $\chi^2=13.000$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.002$ ), perhaps suggesting a population drop although other interpretations are possible (Ellis et al. 2011). Regardless, if we tally the locations by proximity to the Algonquin strandline, it is quite clear there are more Barnes/Parkhill (16/40; 40%) and Crowfield locations (9/25; 36.6%) near that strandline than there are Clovis/Gainey assemblages (N=8/55 or 14.6%) ( $\chi^2=8.670$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.013$ ).

As there is a bias towards discovering the later dating locations, the temporal drop in frequencies is even more precipitous than overall totals would indicate. Indeed, Barnes sites (N=23) are more common than findspots (N=18) in the overall sample because so many of them have been found in purposeful Algonquin area surveys. Crowfield sites, however, are still rare (n=9) versus findspots (N=17) despite an Algonquin bias. This rarity may be due to the fact that all reported Crowfield sites are small and ephemeral compared to Barnes/Parkhill where several larger sites such as Parkhill (Ellis and Deller 2000), Thedford II (Deller and Ellis 1992) and Fisher (Storck 1997) are known. It is notable that even among isolated findspots, many more of the Crowfield items are snapped bases or preforms (76.6%) - more likely to represent occupation sites than isolated losses - compared to the Clovis/Gainey (24.4%) or Barnes (11.1%) ( $\chi^2=19.837$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ ) samples. This difference suggests proportionally more of the Crowfield findspots are actually sites, but are so small and ephemeral that it is difficult to make multiple artifact recoveries.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The database used in this paper was compiled by Hanson and it required the assistance of many individuals. We would like to thank Robert von Bitter at the Ontario Ministry of Culture for his help in compiling an up-to-date database of registered Paleoindian sites in Southern Ontario. Likewise, Robert Pearce at the Museum of Ontario Archaeology allowed access to the museum's

collection of fluted points. Also, gratitude is extended to Robert McDonald, Heather Broadbent, Lawrence Jackson, Andrew Stewart, and Jamie Hunter for the additional site information and references.

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## **ERNIE SACKRIDER'S FIELDNOTES: THE SEALEY SITE**

**By Robert J. Pearce**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Ernie Sackrider was an avid collector from the Otterville area who was active in the late 1950s and 1960s. He recorded his finds and information about the many sites he visited on plain pieces of 8½" by 11" paper which he then three-hole punched and placed in a three-ring binder. A majority of his sketches were done as life-sized outlines or tracings in pen, which he then coloured with pencil crayons. Most of the 100+ pages in his album have illustrations on both sides of the page. Also in the binder were a few sketch maps he had drawn of the sites he had visited.

Many years ago the Museum of Ontario Archaeology had obtained a photocopy of Mr. Sackrider's fieldnotes from the (then) southwestern field office of the Ministry of Culture. In 2000 the Museum accessioned the large collection of Bob Calvert (1910-1999), another avid collector. As well as Bob's 41,732 artifacts (Pearce 2001:7), the Museum received an assortment of notebooks, photographs and miscellaneous documents which he had collected and obtained, and among them was the binder full of Ernie Sackrider's original fieldnotes.

Mr. Sackrider had discovered artifacts on his own family farm just west of Otterville, which he referred to as the Sackrider site. He knew of several other sites in that immediate area including the Uren village. His travels took him as far west as London, where he recorded a small Middle Ontario Iroquois site near the Sifton Bog as well as the nearby Foster site in the Oakridge area. The Museum excavated the Sifton site (AfHh-85) in 1987 (Pearce 1987a) and wrote a brief article about Mr. Sackrider's sketch of and information on the Foster site (Pearce 1987b). The Foster site was subsequently partially excavated by Timmins Martelle Heritage Consultants (Martelle 2002). However, Mr. Sackrider seems to have spent a majority of his collecting time visiting the well-known cluster of historic Neutral Iroquoian sites in the Brantford area, most notably the Walker and Sealey sites.

### **THE SEALEY SITE (AgHa-4)**

The Sealey site is located between two tributaries of the Grand River on Lot 9, 1<sup>st</sup> Range, Brantford Township, Brant County. The site was first reported in the archaeological literature by Frank Waugh in 1903, and it is well known that most of the known artifact collectors from Ontario (and beyond) paid multiple visits to the site to loot artifacts. The most extensive written documentation of the site is contained within Frank Ridley's 1961 publication *Archaeology of*



*the Neutral Indians*, wherein he acknowledged that Ernie Sackrider had an extensive collection from Sealey; Ridley included photographs of some of Sackrider's artifacts from Sealey.

Sackrider's fieldnotes mention that he visited Sealey and other Neutral sites with Frank Kingdon of St. Catharines, Jack Morton of Ancaster and Bill Marshall of Cainsville. Ridley (1961:11) specified that Morton and others had collections from Sealey. The Morton Collection was donated to the Woodland Cultural Centre, the Kingdon Collection was donated to the University of Toronto, and the Marshall Collection was donated to the Royal Ontario Museum (Fox 2001:2). The Bob Calvert collection donated to the Museum of Ontario Archaeology has several items from Sealey, as does a small collection donated to the Museum by Paul Lennox (from his pre-graduate school days). Sealey was also visited on several occasions by archaeologists affiliated with McMaster University including Bill Noble, Paul Lennox and Ian Kenyon. Kenyon and Kenyon (1983) included McMaster's assemblage of glass beads from Sealey (numbering 1,320 – the largest assemblage of glass beads from any of the Neutral sites they analyzed) to assign it to Glass Bead Period IIIA (AD 1620-1640).

The following illustrations are scans of pages or parts of pages from Ernie Sackrider's fieldnotes, all pertaining to the Sealey site.

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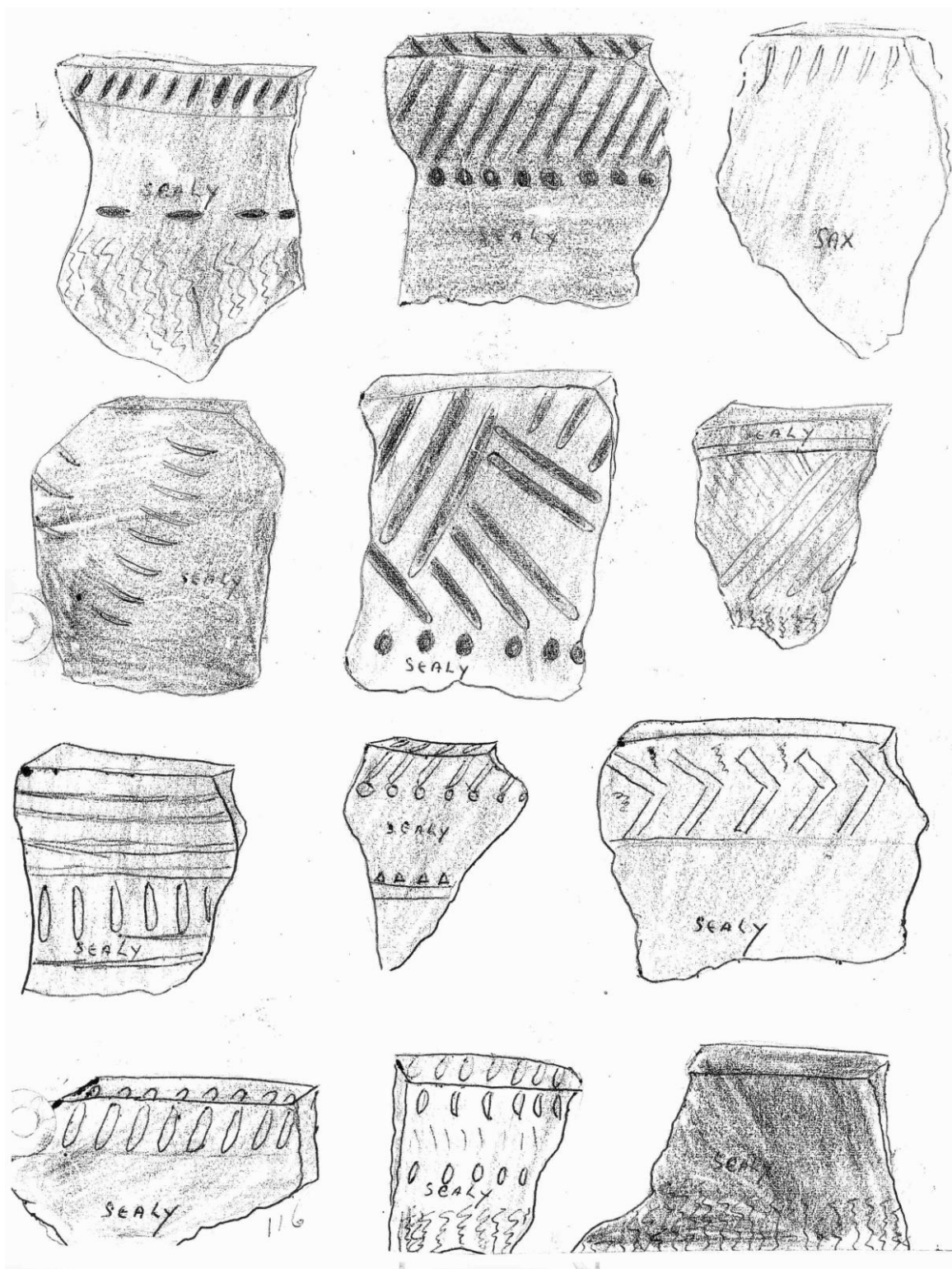
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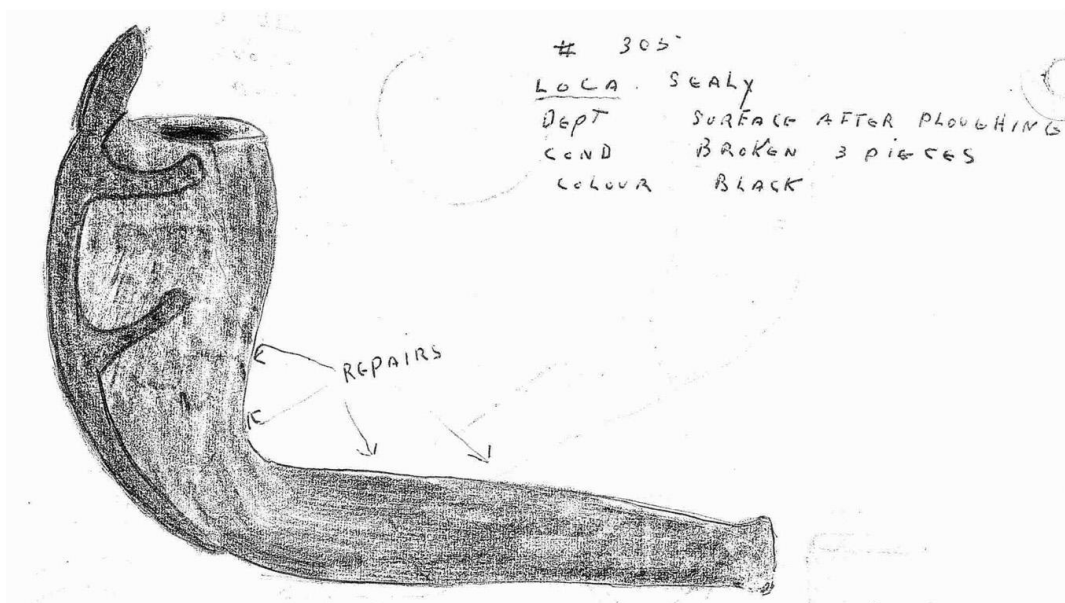
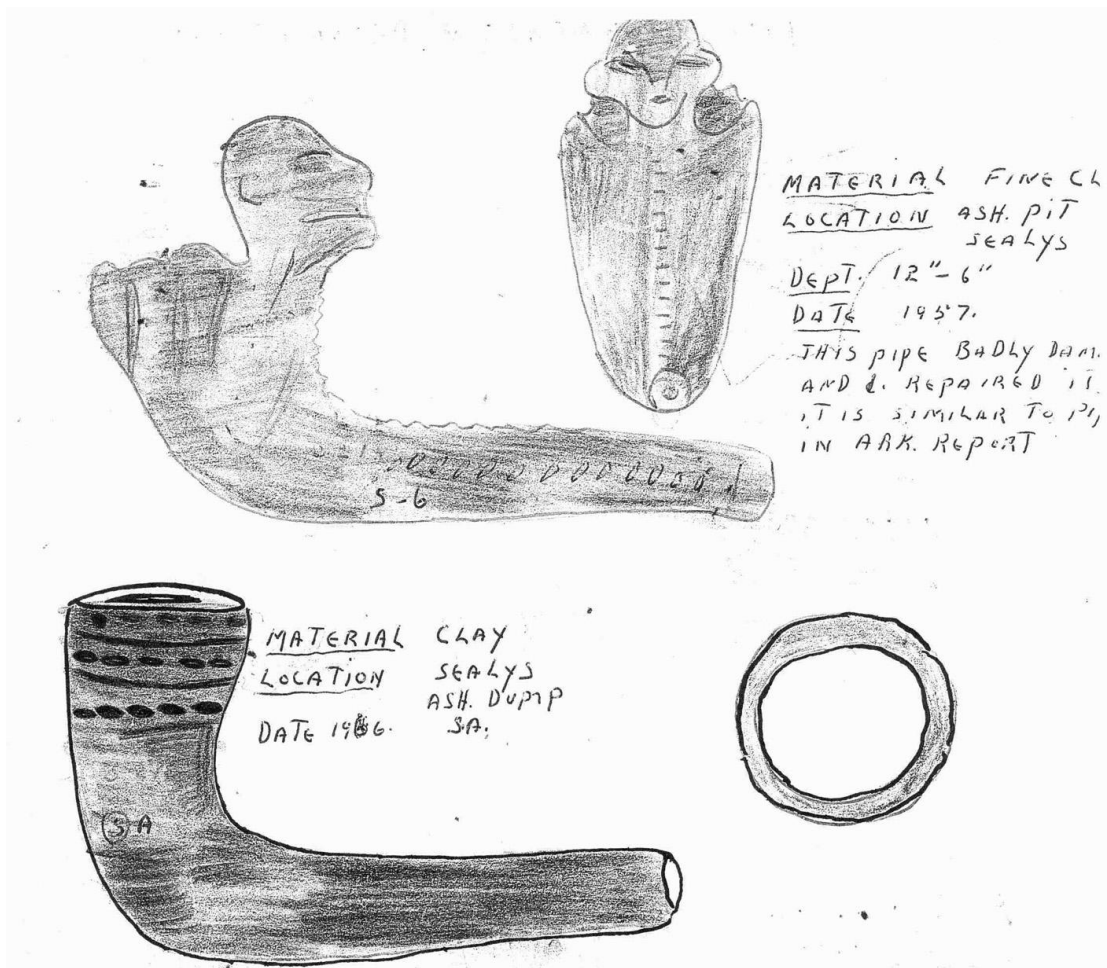
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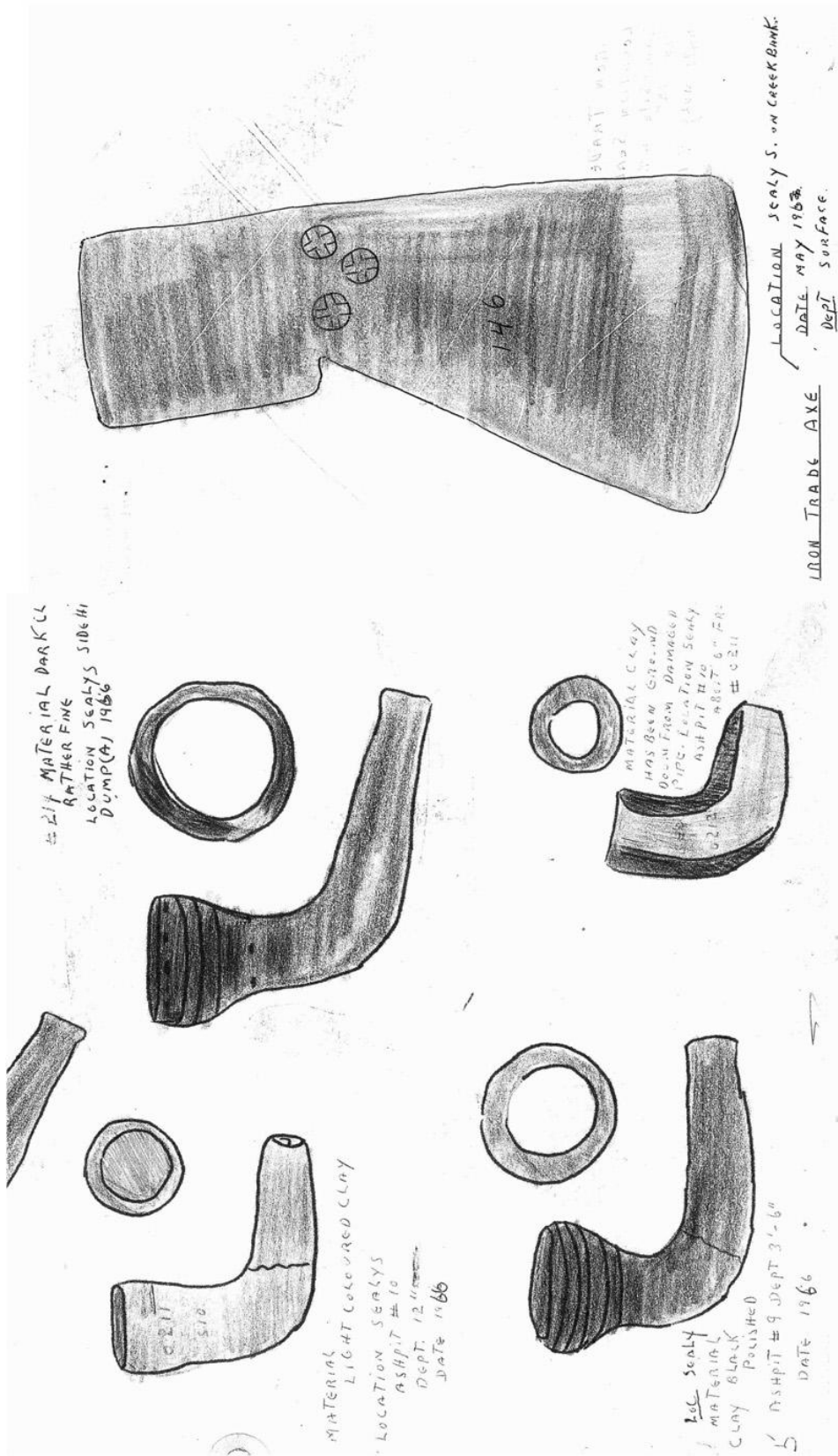
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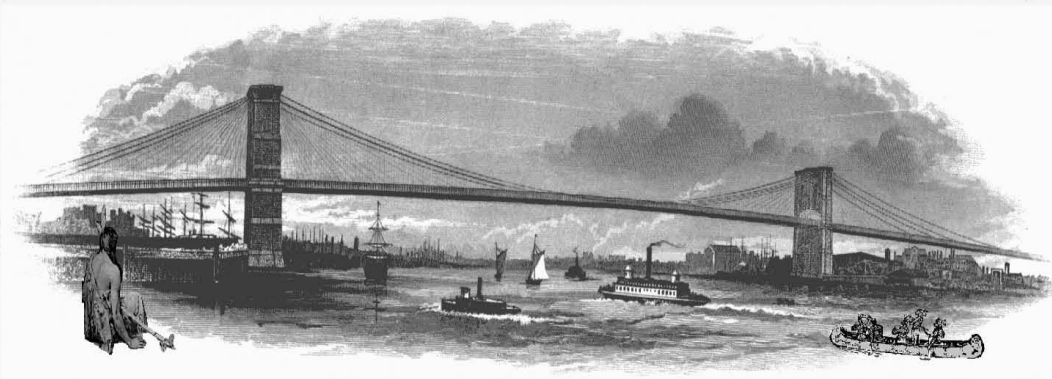






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